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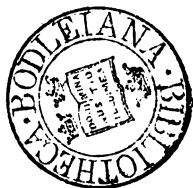
Consoling Thoughts
in Sickness.



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Consoling Thoughts in Sickness



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London
RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE
and at Oxford and Cambridge
1868

141. k. 169.



To the Sick

A FEW words will suffice for the discharge of the office which I have undertaken. An unknown friend wishes to offer you consolation in your sickness. "Knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in" the "brethren that are in the world," the writer has desired to reach them from a sick room of many years.

Allow me, then, to introduce, and recommend to your quiet perusal, the soothing thoughts of this little book. And may the blessing of God rest upon you while you are thus engaged, for Christ's sake!

HENRY BAILEY

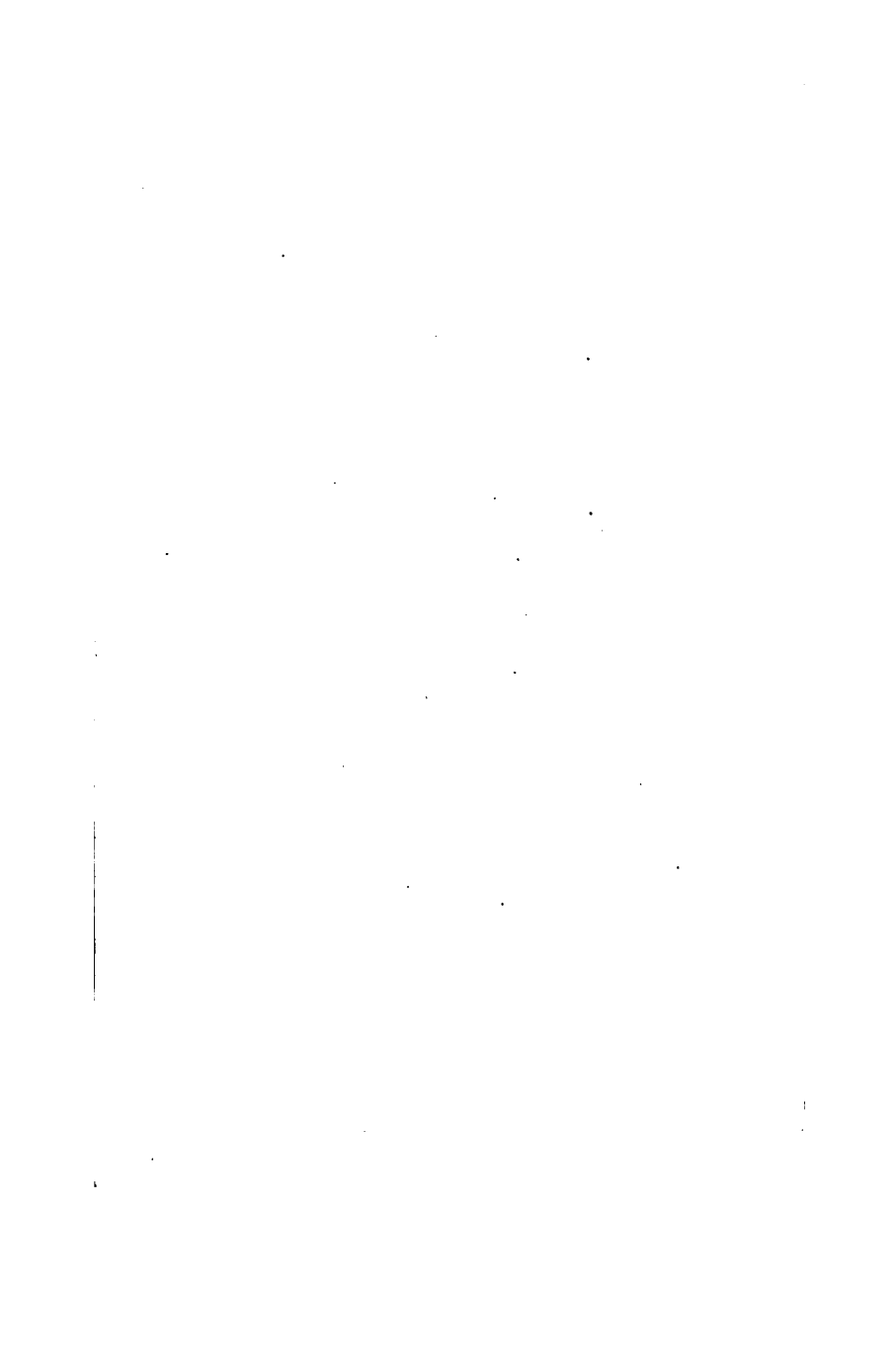
ST. AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE,

All Saints' Day, 1867



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Consoling Thoughts in Sickness



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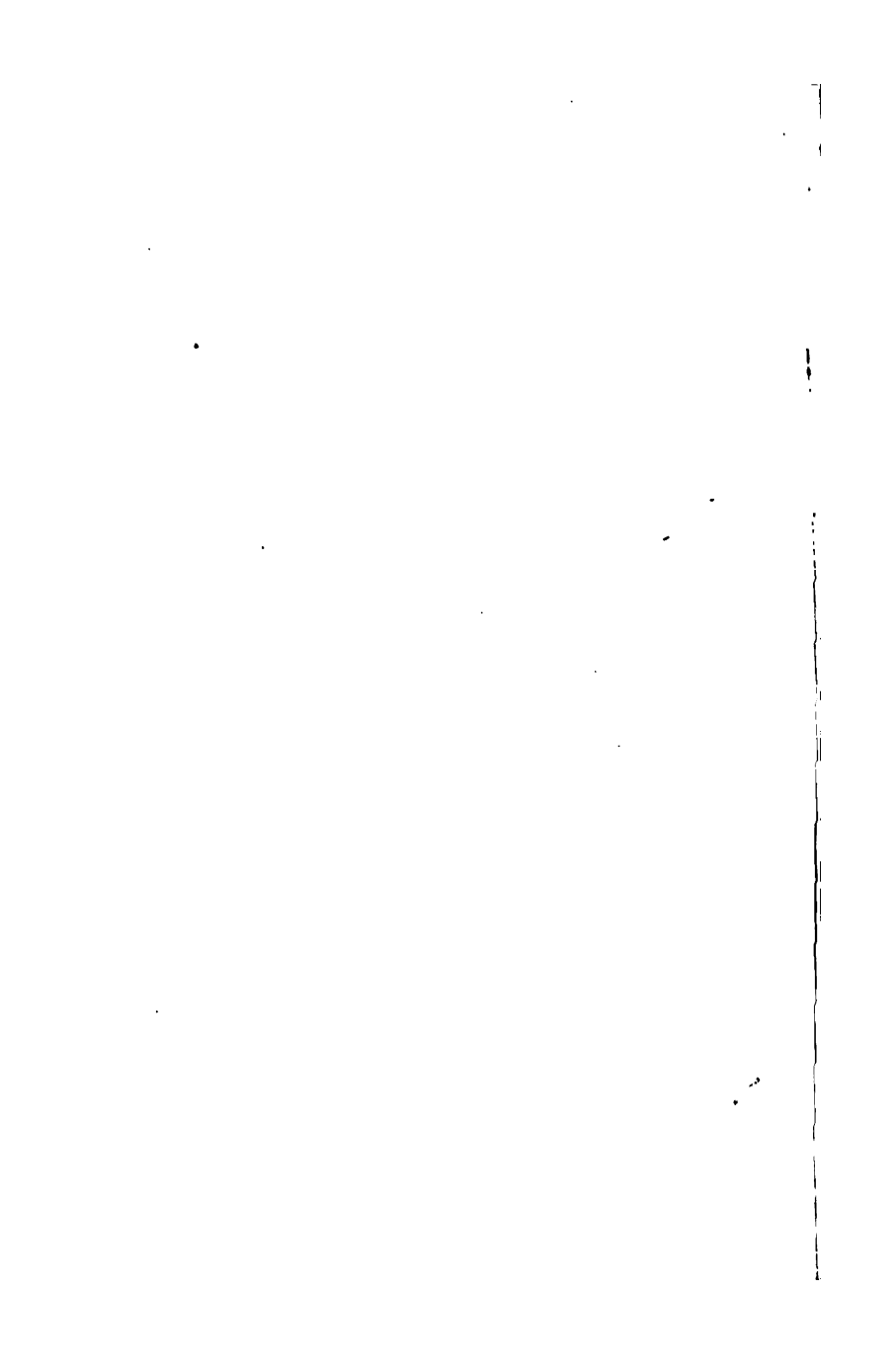
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"My soul is sore vexed : but Thou, O Lord, how long."—Ps. vi. 3.

THE INVALID.

BUT it is not the excess of sickness, or the long time I may suffer, which so shakes me ; it is the suspense which my sickness causes me, and the anxiety too. Every thing in my future life looks doubtful, I seem not to be able to make a plan forward, even the smallest appears presumptuous in me. I have consulted many doctors, and none will tell me to what length my malady may run : after many hopes they

formerly gave me, this silence increases my uneasiness, and I almost regret being undeceived in this. My friends, seeing my distress, suggest to me hopes of cure. I listen, and I do not contradict them, I even pretend to believe them; but when again *alone*, the weight of uncertainty presses still more heavily upon me. Oh! my friend, when will a ray of light give me relief? I do not want to be assured of cure, but only to feel less depression and anxiety.

THE PASTOR.

My son, have you not given yourself up often in prayer to the will of God? Is He not now accepting your promises of being wholly His? In undertaking to serve God, you prepared

yourself to suffer trial, did you not? Humble yourself and *wait*: bear the delays of God, trust on Him and wait. One day your life will open into eternity—try and pray to receive all which comes, and “keep patience in time of adversity.” It is in trial that God proves men, that they may come forth as gold from the fire, purified and fit for our Master’s use. He is tender and merciful, He forgives our sins, He is the Protector and Support of all those who seek Him in truth. Therefore, my friend, do not be dismayed by the uncertainty of your illness—recall the protestations of entire resignation to our Father’s will, which you have so often made. Have you not said, “Lord, I give up my soul to Thee!

Lord, my trust is only in Thee! guide me, direct me, dispose of me as Thou seest best! I accept Thy will, Thy designs for me, I abandon all to Thee?"

You remember, my son, that these are serious promises, and not to be lightly made. God counts upon souls which make such vows as these, and He tries their value by calling those who make them to great trials—that of patience in anxiety being a very great one. Among soldiers, would not a General place in the front those who promised most valour? You have so promised, and you are now to prove your sincerity. Be strong then, hold fast, and you will be helped; if God tarries, it is that you may the better gain the victory, and the

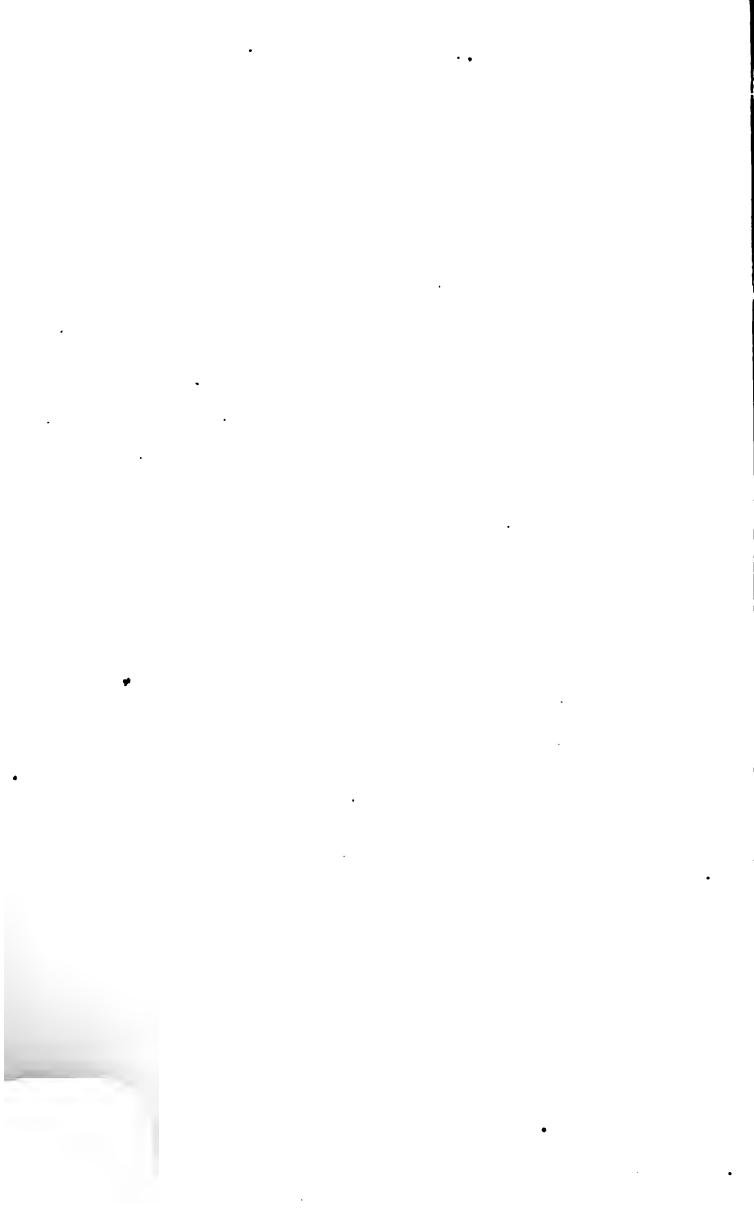
more show forth His glory. Why wish you to know the course and end of your sickness? If you knew that it would be death, weak as you are, would it not greatly agitate you? If you knew that health will soon return, where would be the trial of your trust in God? Believe, then, that He knows and does all best for your soul, and rest patient through this darkness and trial: one day light will fully appear, you know not how soon this relief may be sent. It is happy for us that we know not the future. Who cannot see the mercy which hides from the widow or mother, that she shall, by twenty or thirty years, possibly in bad health herself, outlive the one on earth she loved best? How

would *that* knowledge have aggravated the deep pain of the parting moments! How well it is for us, that we know *not* the evil that even a *day* may bring forth. Yes! let us bless God for this, as for so many, many of His loving mercies to us.

THE INVALID.

Ah! I see now that in the darkness of my spirit I was blind to the remembrance of my promises. I was blind to the mercy which hides from me the pain of the future. Henceforth, I will believe, trust, hope, and wait on Him in whom alone I can trust body and soul, myself, and all that I have and am. Help me, O Lord, to fulfil this good desire for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

Further Remedies for Anxiety



"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."—S. MATTHEW vi. 34.

MY friend, when trial comes, do not fatigue thy mind with looking forward or with calculating how long this malady may last. For there is no more useless work on earth than this ; for affliction comes when we expect it not, and it leaves us, perhaps, when we despaired of any relief, except that which it pleases our heavenly and loving Father to send us. It is wise to try to be neither too much elated by happiness nor too much

cast down when aught comes upon us that we suffer from in mind or body. "Fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil," says David; but our Lord bids us "Take no thought" (for the things of earth), "for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things; but seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Be not unquiet, for the morrow will be provided for, and "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Thus we are forewarned that each day shall have its evil, that we may not expect all peace while sojourning here on earth.

What reason have we for calm in the remembrance of our Father, what trust

and confidence may we not repose in Him! I know not the end of my malady, nor its length—but there is One who knows this end, hidden from me—One who sees all that can come upon me—One who, while I can foresee nothing, foresees all—One who can do all, and, while I walk blindly on, orders my steps wisely; and this All-seeing, All-powerful One, He is my Father—He knows, He can do, and He loves me. What consolation is here! Surely, if earthly fathers can in some measure foresee the bias of their children's minds, and guide them in their course by great love and tenderness, what may we not hope from that Father who is Master of the world, and yet takes care of each one of us, as if we

each were His one care in the universe? He, this tender Father, never ceases His watchfulness over us, He sees our sufferings, our regrets, our fears; He does not see only the *past* as we do, but He knows our *future* days, and He measures the trial by His knowledge of our power to bear it, and never tries us beyond the strength to bear it which He will give if we ask Him in submission. But then, asks a sufferer, "Why does this good Father allow me to be plunged into this storm of distress? He has power, and He loves me, you say; why has He not turned aside this evil that He foresaw?"

Christian! Why did He allow this trial? Ask yourself. Is your soul worse

since you suffer; is it not more detached from things of time; is it not more free from evil thought and passions? Ask yourself. Has not sickness purified and sanctified your soul? Are you not more feeling for the wants and sufferings of others, more compassionate and generous, more anxious to help those in suffering than before you suffered yourself? And are you not thus brought nearer to your Heavenly Lord? Let go, then, your complaints and murmurs. Believe the word of the Lord Christ, "Your Father sees and knows your wants," and be persuaded that nothing has come to you but for the welfare of your soul. Let this watchful Father take care henceforth of you; and,

without anxious ponderings about the future, seek to begin and end each day to His glory, and in patient trust and waiting on Him, and realize that "sufficient to each day is the evil thereof."

Each day! It is in great mercy and wisdom that the Father of all has divided time into days, that we may learn to use well *the day* as it begins and ends. Consider! if a workman were placed before a fine building, and told to make a similar one, he would be astonished and discouraged by a work which passed his knowledge or strength; but if the architect, without unfolding his plan, gave him each day a task proportioned to his power, only fixing each morning his work for the day, the

workman would set to work with good will, and in time the building would be finished. Thus is it with the work of our salvation. If the Divine Lord showed to each of us what He intends us in this probation on earth to become, we should grieve over the immense work and sit down in despair, doing nothing. But the wise Architect of our happiness orders better the work He gives us to do. He hides the *whole*; He shows us only day by day the portion of the plan which He means us to fulfil. He divides our work; He knows the hours of our day, and He measures our work to our strength. The task which He has fixed for this day; that is all that it is needful for us to know. Let

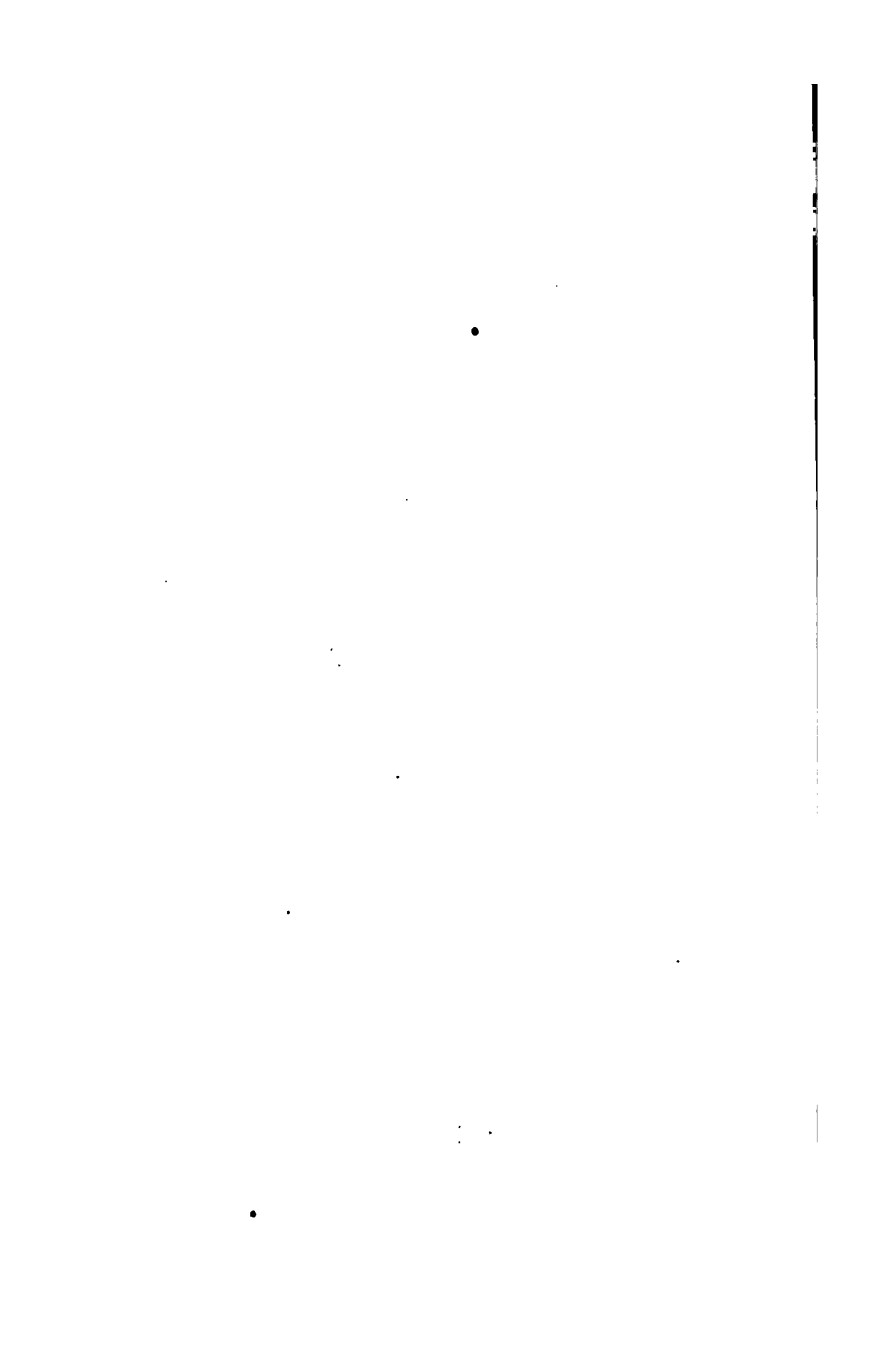
us all day work to accomplish this task ; evening come, let us do as the workman does, who, without anxiety for the next day's work, and without dreaming of the plan he knows not, places quietly under his arm the bread he has earned, and sings as he wends his way homeward to repose.

“Sufficient to the day” is its evil. Have you not, then, enough trials in the day of sickness which the loving Father orders for you? Why look on and try to lift beforehand the burden of to-morrow? Bless God that He has hid it from you; bless Him that He has made the succession of days and seasons, that our frail nature should have change and rest—our weak nature, which is

incapable of continued effort. One day the succession of day and night will be over; earth will have her last day, the morning of eternity will dawn. We shall then see all the work that, by the help of God, and by His merciful division of labour for us, we shall, in His strength, have accomplished during our mortal life. I think that those then saved, by our Lord Jesus Christ's merits and mercy, will be astonished at the greatness of their work, and will never tire of gratitude for His mercy who so ordered and fulfilled their work. They will then, astonished at the beauty of the building which, under God, their hands have raised by suffering and effort, cry out, "How have the work

and sufferings of a few days and hours of mortals done such a work?" And the answer will be, "Each day has had its evil (*i.e.* its own trials), and its work."

The Sick Chamber



'Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still.'—

PSALM iv. 4

*"In thy chamber thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt too often lose ;
the more thou visitest thy chamber, the more thou wilt like it."—*

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

THOMAS À KEMPIS advises the monks to whom he writes to try to love their cells ; to like the quiet thought and calm that they can find there in solitude, and the silence there which disposes to prayer. In like manner may persons learn to love their sick room ; when they know they are about to pass some long time there, they may strive to find out the enjoyments which are there to be found, instead of murmuring at

their confinement to it. The first consolatory thought is, that it is God's will, who orders this for them for some wise purpose of love to them, which they see not now, but shall see hereafter by His mercy. Many people take a dislike to their room, and regard it with looks of distress and disdain, instead of trying to make the best of it, as the order of God for their present good; but the true way of receiving this, as all the chastisements of our Father, is humbly to try to find out advantages in it. Remember that here God will draw very nigh to you, if you refuse Him not; here will He come most solemnly, in the person of your pastor, bringing to you the Holy Sacra-

ment of His Body and Blood ; thenceforth consider your room a very sacred holy place, into which no evil or idle thoughts or words should be admitted any more. Then look round, and see any sacred print by which you may have ornamented it, or which the kindness of friends has given you—that print or picture may give you many happy and holy thoughts ; and the kindness of dear friends who may have brought you these gifts, must raise thoughts of love and gratitude in your heart for their love, and for the Infinite love which has given you such good friends as human comforters. Then look at your books ; if then, from suffering, unable to read, the sight of them may give you many happy

and comforting recollections of their contents, above all, your Bible and Prayer Book—what comfort can you not find in them, and the thoughts which looking at them brings? Then flowers, which always adorn a sick room, and are mementoes of the great love which gives us such lovely objects for our solace and pleasure. Look and think over all these objects. Perhaps you may have a lovely view from your window, of country sights and scenes—bless God for *that*; but if otherwise,—if your sight takes in but a dull street,—you may perchance see many a passer-by who looks afflicted, for whom a prayer, even a thought, may avail for help, if your power extends no further. But in your

sick room, you will have surely at least *one* attendant, to whom a word in season may do good ; and to whom the sight of your sufferings patiently borne, if by God's grace you can patiently bear them, will be a help and good lesson ; thus, the remembrance that, though precluded from active service, you may be in a small degree submitting to and fulfilling God's will for you, will gradually make you fond of your room, and willing patiently to await His will as to the time of leaving it. Will not all these thoughts give you new views of your imprisonment in your room ? And you will seek in as many little ways as are in your power, to embellish it with an added print or drawing, or an illumi-

nated text, thus adding to your fondness for your abode. Strive also to occupy your thoughts well; and drive away, if possible, that desire for change which is such a constant trial to sick people: nothing so hinders their recovery as this sad wish to be always changing their place, going here or going there, as one friend or another says this or that air is beneficial. How many sick people suffer more and more from being taken from place to place, in the hope of recovery, when a patient mind in their home, and the best advice they can get in a good conscientious physician, would be far better for them. In the silence of their room, the sick are more likely to "commune with their hearts, and be

still," than moving to divers places, and trying this and that remedy—possibly often idle and quack remedies, which do more harm than good. My sick friend, do you content yourself with your room, and, when equal to it, pray earnestly for help and submission to God's will; read your Bible and Prayer Book; join, if possible, in the daily services carried on in Church—in mind, if you cannot in body; then refresh yourself by your books, and your prints, and ornaments, and flowers, and thus pass happily along the days God wills you to be kept a sufferer. A very little suffices, when one is wise, for the happiness of man. Do you try to love your abode?

Weakness

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3

"He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."—ISAIAH xl. 29.

WHEN the sick feel their strength becoming less and less, they often ask, in despair, why God has reduced them thus; but raise your head, and hope in Him. Was it not in the depth of weakness and poverty that our Lord Jesus Christ willed to come into this world to save us sinners? Why, then, measure the designs of God in you by your weakness? He "has chosen the weak things of this world to confound the mighty," can He not make the weak to work to

His glory, if so He wills? Can you not believe that He may in preference choose to employ the weak? "My strength is made perfect in weakness." When will you believe that this weakness, devoted to God and His service, is then stronger than all the strength of men? Look at many of His saints, those He has enabled to do the greatest works—they astonished the world. They, in their weakness and humility, became strong in spite of infirmities—"out of weakness were made strong." If you were strong, perhaps God would not so employ you to glorify Him; for often the strong become proud and haughty, and consider their works their own, and turn them to their own honour and glory,

instead of to His, to whom all power and honour are due. Those who have long proved their weakness, have in that state learned to lean more fully and entirely on God. St. Paul knew and felt this state of weakness, and even rejoiced in it: "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities;" "I will glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me;" "When I am weak, then am I strong." Strange words these seem to be, and like a paradox, but sublime in reality; for the weakness felt by the servant calls to the all-powerful help of the Master, and thus true strength grows and is fulfilled in infirmity.

O thou who feelest strength failing, and

who, pausing in the road of life, askest with despair why God has reduced thee thus—lift up thy heart, and hope in Him. Thou art weak, but with the help of God thou mayest attack all difficulties ; as David, in his combat with Goliath, approaching in the strength of the Lord, with his feeble arm subdued the giant. Thou wilt then be astonished at thy victories over self, and, remembering ever thine own weakness, thou wilt give praise and glory to the all-loving Lord, to Whom it is alone due, and Who is ever a strong tower to them who hope and trust in Him.

The Physician

*"Honour a physician with the honour due unto him for the uses which
ye may have of him: for the Lord hath created him."*

ECCLUS. xxxviii. 1.

HONOUR a physician, for he is necessary to thee, and God has appointed him: for all remedies are sent by God; He has made them to grow out of the earth, and has given skill to employ them to the relief of His suffering children. Offer first prayer to God, and then summon the physician. There is a time when in his hands there is great success. Then have confidence in him without fear, trusting all to God. The most part of men either disbelieve in

his power to relieve them, or else feel a sort of blind superstition about his skill. Both these ideas are contrary to good sense and justice. Do not listen to the foolish raillery of some who have never suffered, or required his aid. Let that pass as a folly. If seriously answered, it is as thus: "Sooner or later, my friend, you will be in the physician's hands, and will then alter your opinion." Certainly, after the knowledge of the soul, there is no knowledge so great as that of the body; and he who has this science possesses a great strength for good or for evil. He who has ever seen an operation performed, and the calm, quiet way in which a skilful man executes so momentous an act, must be

struck forcibly by its grandeur, and feel a sort of religious respect for one who can thus repair the body of man. Yes, honour him ; for man could never have such power had not God vouchsafed to give it to him. Honour him, then, for his knowledge, for his devoted life to his often painful profession ; honour him for the benevolence which he has received from God ; honour him for the power he has often to relieve greatly, and often to cure disease. *But*, honour him as a man, and not as a god. Hope from him what he is able to do, but do *not* expect impossibilities. There are some persons who pray for, and expect to receive, graces and helps from God that He can only grant by deranging the order of

His governance of the world. These unreasonable demands surely offend the majesty of God; and they deprive those who make them of the benefits of a respectful and submissive supplication to the loving Father who orders all aright. Something like this may be seen in one who, after having while in health scornfully spoken of the physician, in the seizure of illness expects miracles from him, and repines if he cannot cure an incurable malady or arrest the power of death. This does not please God, and is contrary to both reason and faith. The true thought is to have a right and fair confidence in the skill given by God for relief of suffering, but to feel also that God alone is infallible, and that the

cleverness of man cannot work works that are Divine: thus you will expect relief from the physician, but all from God; as said a good man, "I have tended him, but God has cured him."

But all physicians are not equally good. Some think only of the *body* of the patient; but we are composed of body and soul, and, as the soul acts upon the body, it is needful to select one who has regard to the soul's welfare as well as to that of the body. You have a soul, and have a right that that nobler part of man should be respected amid your pains and sufferings. The man to whom you give the care of your body must in a measure act on your soul; therefore choose one who is honest, true,

modest, disinterested, and who does not *pretend* to be able to cure every disease that flesh is heir to—above all, one who is at heart truly religious, not ever *speaking* on religion, but in acts and words showing that he is *guided* always by its dictates. Such men are often to be found: I have met with many in my course of life. Many untaught people suppose that the practice of medicine, when once learned, is a sort of easy routine; but this is not so; for as no one soul is precisely like any other one soul, so no body is exactly like another body: thus, the physician has to take into consideration all that belongs to that one person, and to adapt his remedies to fit into that one case; he

therefore requires the highest medical education and training, and, when he writes a prescription, has to exercise much thought and skill, which do not appear to outward observers, who fancy because, from long habit, it is quickly done, and he can soon look through the symptoms, that it is an easy matter ; and many, in consequence, grumble at the proper payment he should receive ; but one gifted to be able to apply general rules to special cases, and to cure disorders sometimes beyond ordinary rules, is important enough to be well remunerated. But think not that a good physician *is* rewarded when his fee is given. There are some things which can never be paid in this world. The soldier is

not paid *really* on the battle-field, nor the priest at the altar ; so what *money* payment can suffice for the physician who runs the risk of contagion, and often holds several times a day the burning hand which relatives and friends shrink from touching ? This is what can never be paid for, but on high, in the treasure-house of God, where his noble deeds of mercy are recorded, and by, here below, the utmost gratitude and remembrance of those he has so kindly and generously done his best, without thought of self, to relieve and restore to health.

Remedies

"He giveth medicine to heal their sicknesses."—Ps. cxlvii. 3.

GOD is every where. This is one of those truths which we think we believe, but we do so very inadequately at best. When we approach these first truths deeply, we wonder, and almost fear, to see them grow and enlarge, till we are lost in their immensity. God is every where. St. Paul says, "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." God is present in all things; not only in their beginning, but in their continuance also. All things are veils which cover God from mortal sight. All creatures are

like sacraments, the outward signs that God is there within. He is present, in essence, in every thing and place. Still with all reverence must this thought be held and propounded, else great error and confusion might arise. But a good Christian will avoid such an error, and humbly think on the greatness of the Almighty, and the littleness of man His favoured creature.

Thus, God being every where, He is in light, in truth, in food for soul and body, even in the remedy which is to repair the diseased body. Have you ever thought thus? When recommended, in an hour of great suffering, to have recourse to a remedy, and it has been successful in restoring or relieving

you, have you perceived the benefit of God's gift? Have you adored Him, hidden under this veil? Oh, how do men make use constantly of things without thought of any thing but themselves, and see not God in all! He is in each substance as its author and support, and is yet also in the specific action which He orders that it should take. What comfort is there here to the sufferer in a cruel malady! He is present as a special agent, applying His remedy to the special ill it is to relieve. From this arises the conviction that it is permitted to us to pray to God for His blessing on the appointed remedy, and that He will increase its efficacy. He has many ways of acting on the efficacy of a remedy,

without altering His usual order of things. He can excite the virtue of the medicine, or He can act on the body so as to dispose it to receive the remedy in such sort as to make it most beneficial. We see, then, how right it is to recognize in the natural specific the merciful presence of Him who made and orders all in His love and wisdom. We see, then, that it *is* wise to pray to Him in employing remedies, and that it is wise to give all gratitude and praise to God after relief or cure. Once again, the weakness of man, and his thoughtlessness, make him not to observe and see how God is in all things and every where. We think of Him as very far off from us, above the heavens, and distant

- from this lower world ; but He is, instead of that, *ever near*,—"about our path, about our bed, and spieth out all our ways." May He "lead us in the way everlasting!"

The Obedience of the Sick

"Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." -

2 COR. X. 5.

"**Y**ET learned He obedience by the things which He suffered:" thus does Holy Scripture speak of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We also read that He "was subject" unto His earthly parents, though Lord of all. What a pattern for us to copy, is His "holy One!" and how better can we follow it than by obedience in sickness? First, we are told to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service." This text is specially applicable to the sick; for, more than

others, should they give a reasonable obedience to their Heavenly Lord, when He, in His love, chastises them with sufferings. This is carried on by thoughts and acts of submission to His holy will, giving up ourselves to Him entirely, and with cheerfulness and patience under the sickness He sees fit to order for us. Next comes the obedience due to the physician, and that must be a reasonable obedience; for it might be, that a man who cared little for the soul, might direct things to be done or left undone which would be wrong. Some persons say, "The doctor said it," and think that to be a supreme law, and would follow his word even where it contradicts God's law. But if the sufferer has the blessing to be

attended by one who is good and thinks no less of the soul than of the body, then obedience to such an one will be safe. A man whose virtue as well as his skill is known to you, deserves to be obeyed, and will exact only a reasonable obedience from his patient. Such an one knows the sufferer's duties towards God, because he tries to fulfil his own duties, and will thus take account for a soul while he does his best to relieve the body of a sufferer. He will have but one object in view, that of restoring you as soon as it is possible to the power of doing your duties. When this man speaks, and orders or forbids acts, it is right and pleasing to God to obey him. The sick Christian person should look

on himself as a victim, and accept all the details of the sacrifice of self, painful and repugnant as they may be; and the first duty of a victim is to submit, to give up his own will to that of God, and thus to be obedient. This is reasonable, for it is offered to God, who uses men and events for trials of the patience and faith of those He loves. And this obedience is the best means for recovery of health, if so God wills, and the fulfilment of the duties He calls us to perform. Every soul sent into this world brings with it an order from God for the execution of a part of His divine plan: this is the vocation. The body enters also into the work, and, as a servant, receives from the soul a form of life and duties to be

accomplished. The soldier uses his body to gain power and cleverness in his calling; the priest devotes himself to his vocation; the artist strives for correctness of eye and hand for his profession of art; the physician to gain skill and experience; and the learned man studies deeply what he desires to know. These all use their bodies in subjection to their souls. Thus, then, when a malady seizes the body, it is just, and wise, and pleasing to God to use all right and proper means, and such as He has blessed, to restore the body to the strength needful for its duties; and the more the physician seeks to restore the health, the more obedience to his rules should be given. What must be then concluded from all this,

but to be persuaded that, by the help of God, it is possible to attain that right measure of obedience which elevates those who command, comforts the obedient, and seeks above all that the will of our loving Father may be ever done in us and by us ?

Patience

*"As for me, I will patiently abide alway, and will praise thee more
and more."—Ps. lxxi. 12.*

I WOULD persuade those who have suffered for years, and no longer dare hope for the cure of their sickness, to study well the miracle of the poor paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda. For thirty-eight years this sufferer, deprived almost entirely of the use of his limbs, still came in hopes that he might some day obtain a cure. He trusted in God, and hoped perseveringly that a blessing might at length be his. At the time when the angel troubled the pool, he made great efforts to cast himself into this healing

bath; but, always prevented by one more rapid in movement than his disease permitted *him* to be, he remained still suffering as of old ; but he did not lose courage or hope, but put off till another time a new effort. One day, when his hope led him again to the pool, and he had just borne a fresh disappointment, but, without impatience or murmur, rested on his couch quiet in patience, he perceived suddenly near him a man of sweet, holy, and grave aspect, and heard Him speak the wonderful words, “Wilt thou be made whole?” After thirty-eight years of illness, did not this question at first appear a mockery? Does he receive it thus? No! for he believes and hopes still—he answers simply “Sir, I have no

man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool but . . . another steppeth down before me." The holy Saviour answers him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." Oh, what a surprising word! and the effect of it more astonishing yet! Oh, blessed moment, in which the Lord rewarded the patience of the sick and repaired the sufferings of a life! "Arise and walk." The sufferer shall hear this at the Resurrection, but it will be at the right time, and it will be worth a life of submission and patience. For it is the will of God that, though in an instant His order would be accomplished, He usually follows, in the government of things, the order of His Providence. If the Paralytic had been cured at the

beginning of his illness, he would not have afforded to men such a pattern of hopeful patience, nor would his suffering have redounded to the glory of God in the record of the stupendous miracle worked by our Lord in His tender mercy. He knew this man's long endurance, and gave relief; He would not allow him to be longer so tried. He was surprised as well as joyful, so sudden was his cure—it was the work of love, who, for the trial of patience, hides for a time His nearness to the sufferer. What a blessed hour is that, when long days of patience are at length ended by relief! Among all proofs of faith and love that a soul can show to our Lord, none surpass this untiring patience, such as was

shown in the case of this man, who was never discouraged by the failure of his attempts to obtain his cure, nor his faith shaken by his many disappointments. Thus, to the sick is appointed a great and noble work ; and the Christian who suffers and feels at times forsaken of God, and yet can persist in faithful patience year after year, is in some sort a martyr. But if, as in some disorders, the body presses on the soul, and causes deep depression and discouragement, endeavour to still those thoughts, and in silence pray to our loving Father, that all you suffer of mind and body may be borne in submission to His holy will. Rest yourself, in mind, by the pool of the Paralytic ; see, without disturbance or jealousy, others

receiving cure or relief. Think not harshly of God or man, wait patiently, humbly, and if He delays long, still wait; He will come at last; He will not tarry for ever. When we who belong to the Church of England—the branch of the Catholic Church which holds, more than any other branch, the true faith, “once for all delivered to the saints” by the Apostles—when we remember how the sick are in this Church cared for—her beautiful Office for the Visitation of the Sick; above all, the Holy Communion ordered for the sick, as their consolation and strength under suffering, and which a good clergyman will give as often as the sick desire its blessing,—we feel how we in this Church are assisted “to bear

our sickness patiently," and, however long our trial lasts, should pray and endeavour never to be discouraged or faint-hearted, but wait and struggle on from day to day, feeling, with such heavenly supports as are granted to us, that as our day of suffering is, so will our strength to bear it be mercifully given to the faithful, hopeful, and patient. A good writer says, "If we daily pray to our Lord 'Remember me in Thy kingdom,' a day will at last come, however long delayed, when He will say, 'To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.'" May such a blessed end be ours through His merits and mercies who died for us, and lives to intercede continually for our pardon and acceptance!

Reading fitted for the Sick

"Wise men lay up knowledge."—PROV. X. 14.

IF the malady does not affect the head and senses, thank God for that blessing, and try to profit by it. It is most unwise to sink into idleness, for the mind then acts on the body, and exaggerates its ailments; while a proper degree of activity in mind supports and tends to restore the health of the body. Much must, however, depend on the state of feebleness to which the sick is reduced; but, supposing that there is strength for reading, though not for ordinary occupation, how many painful and unhappy

moments are avoided by books ! Let us, then, consider the choice to be made. Have you hitherto been accustomed to read only idle books ? Here is a good occasion to break off that habit. Sad to say, it is true that many, not content even with silly, idle books, read those that are exciting, and, from their confusing right and wrong, and making bad people interesting in story, do the greatest evil in undermining good principles. Such books, it is hoped, would be sedulously kept from a sick room, as you would exclude bad persons tempting to vice. Their presence is, in case of sickness, a calamity. Think of the weakness sickness brings, and cast such poison from you. The sick live much in thought

and memory; many sleepless hours are thus spent. Let all that is read be what may render such solitary hours a pure and holy time of recollection. Happy those who have never lost the treasure of noble thoughts! all regrets and efforts for forgetfulness can scarcely ever repair the ruin of this evil. In considering books to be read by the sick, it would be wrong to deny to them such as are harmlessly amusing, which often wile away depression and fatigue; and good story books infuse many an heroic and patient thought, and refresh the spirits when worn. Such, then, must be sought; and many historical works and lives of renowned and noble characters, travels, &c., are excellent for

this purpose; but very exciting novels are not good even when their principles are sound, as the interest, especially at night, often causes fever, and want of sleep, and restlessness; also, controversial books are too trying to be much used in a sick room, where strength and the support of true and loving faith in God is so needed for consolation in suffering. Now that active life is denied, the time is good for some serious, good, profitable reading. First of all, the Holy Scripture; and, if a doubt arises as to what part to begin with, take at once the order of our mother the Church: she appoints us four chapters each day, and if that were too many for a sick person, the two from the New Testament, or

even portions of them, as the sick is equal to bear to hear them read, gives at once a solution to the doubt as to where to begin. It is a singular fact, that those who, either in health or during sickness, follow the order of the Church, in reading either the whole morning and evening service, or such portions of it as they are equal to, almost invariably find something in the psalms or lessons of the *day*, which tells on the sorrow or suffering they feel, or gives some word of direction in cases of perplexity and doubt, such as fits into the wants of the reader. Now if a fit of illness brings a person into the habit of more deep and devotional reading of the Holy Bible and the study of the Prayer Book, which so entirely shows

forth the Bible doctrines, what a blessing will such illness have brought to the sufferer! One feels in such times of retirement the sublime simplicity and grandeur of the inspired words of Holy Writ; they strike with force unknown before, and read as often as we may, the Bible words are ever fresh and beautiful. In the Prayer Book, the Office for the Visitation of the Sick is in itself a study, so exquisitely fitted to foster the right state of mind which a sinner should have while under the chastening hand of our loving heavenly Father. Then, next to the Bible, and its best expositor the Prayer Book, the "Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis, is a book the humble soothing words of which, and the prac-

tical directions it contains, cannot be too much prized; add to this "The Christian Year," the poetry of which book so enforces the humble, lowly, obedient spirit to which the Church would train us in all her services. These and some simple volumes of practical sermons, are ample reading for the sick of the serious sort. They will teach and keep alive in us the thoughts of the coming of our Lord, and how we must prepare to meet Him at His coming to judgment. He comes to us *now*, in our pains, sicknesses, and sufferings, in all our trials of mind and body; He comes to us in all the consolation He allows us from friends and from books; He comes in the relief and cure of illness, which He permits in this

earthly life, and in the great deliverance He prepares for us in eternity. In every way that He wills to come to us, let us wait in watchfulness and prayer, "in quietness and confidence," in meditation and holy reading.

Visitors to the Sick

*"The world's a room of sickness—
The truest wisdom there
Is his, who skills of comfort best."*—CHRISTIAN YEAR.

THE first thing to be done, when an attack of illness comes, is to close the door and keep quiet; that gives the best hope of restoration, for tranquillity of mind ever acts for good on the body. Then, if the sickness continues, the question is, Who is to be admitted? and here there is a difficulty. Many well-meaning persons are also very inquisitive, and would like all details of the malady; some, also, are talkative, and think to amuse the sick by the gossip of the

world. These often sadly fatigue the invalid, therefore these are to be denied admittance. It is one of the blessings of sickness, to give us time for retreat into ourselves, and calm thought. In the busy world we speak so much. How much have we talked in the past years! Would not a little silence for a time be a repose? If you like novelty, would not quiet thought bring some surprises, and perhaps emotions that would be useful and lead to amendment of faults, perhaps, overlooked hitherto! Silence is the time for God to visit the soul! Reserve, therefore, the greater part of time for this Holy Guest! He will not fatigue, He will ever comprehend, He will not leave a suffering soul without having

blessed and improved it, if that soul is willing to receive His blessed gifts. God first, in prayer and meditation; then visitors—few in number. Those whom God's Providence has appointed as the members of the family of the sick, those dear ones who reside in the home, He has ordained also to be our chief comforters in trial. If these be *many*, the sick require *very* few beyond these, who, attached by natural ties, will cause less exertion to the sick than those admitted from without. Then the nurses of the sick, if faithful old servants, are ever ready to tend and give care and comfort. All the world's caresses and talk are not to be thought of in comparison with these faithful friends, who

consider nothing troublesome whereby they may help the sufferer to some comfort and relief of pain. The above-named, with the visits of the Clergyman and Physician, will be almost sufficient for the sick in any short illness ; but if more be desired, it should be only some old, and tried, and valued friends that should be admitted—those who will be discreet in what they speak of, so as to give comfort, and discreet in so shortening or lengthening their visits, as not to add fatigue to the sufferer's ailments. They will possibly read a few words, and speak cheerfully and kindly, but without too much inquiry into symptoms of illness, which often only distress the sick, and are really the proper business of

the Physician. But some sick people like to speak of their sufferings. These should be indulged for a little while, and then the subject quietly altered, perhaps to interest them in the sorrow or suffering of others, which lifts them out of the selfishness which is one of the temptations of sick people; but all this must be regulated by the judicious thought of the friend who visits; as cases of sickness and temperament vary so much, that different treatment is needful in nearly every case. Then the sick should strive *not* to disturb those kind enough to visit them, with sad complainings of their sufferings, which give no relief to the sick: and, if they can with cheerful patience bear their ills, it benefits those

who see them, to witness how religion can support in heavy trial. How much do those who visit the sick poor learn, by the homely, but often most holy and sublime, words of heavenly submission they speak, how to bear sickness, and how to counsel others to bear it patiently. Wonderful, often, is the wisdom with which the good poor speak ; and when we know how few are their alleviations in sickness, compared with those given to the rich, these may well take lessons humbly from those who suffer in the midst of poverty and discomfort. And how cordially do these good poor welcome a friendly visit from those above them ! how grateful are they for any help given them, for even kind words

of sympathy in their trials. Those who have thus seen the poor, may well contrast their *own* comforts in sickness, and grieve for their want of more submission, patience, and gratitude to the loving Father Who has appointed their happier lot in health and in sickness, and try to imitate their poorer neighbours in their own sufferings, and also to alleviate to their utmost power the trials which are borne by the poor under such want of comforts and consolation.

Life a Combat

"Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience."

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

"**L**IFE on earth is a constant struggle."

This is a most true word; it signifies that the soul of man, menaced ever by the evil one, must be a life of war against him and against the evil within, which gives the devil the advantage over us. We must ever *watch* as well as pray for help against his snares. In the weakness of illness, it is the more difficult to keep up this watchfulness, and to repair day by day the inroads made by temptations at such a time. When we suffer, and are perhaps expecting death itself, what

care should be taken against his assaults. Our Church teaches us, while laying our dearest friends in the grave, to pray, "Suffer us not at our last hour to fall from Thee," thus showing the great need of this combat with evil, and the necessity of training ourselves in the constant fight we must wage through life with failings and faults. This is the case even with those which may be caused by infirmities and feelings which many would regard as small and unworthy to occupy a Christian's mind.

There are some disorders which leave persons so disfigured, that they dread to be looked at by those they love—that they shrink from the world's eye; and it is a great effort even to go to church,

through fear of the world's remarks. How much is their trial increased by these feelings, and how far more difficult is it for those so afflicted to bear with fortitude their appointed lot of sickness; how they must desire to hide their altered persons, perhaps once beautiful, now scarred by small-pox or other disease, from acquaintance, and to live in solitude; and what strength it must require, to subdue the morbid and nervous feelings which are produced by so painful a state! One alone, Christ crucified, can support and strengthen one so situated: the hand of man has not gentleness sufficient for the touch of all this inward distress. Let the afflicted not seek aid of man here, but refer and confide all to

our loving and tender Lord Jesus Christ, the true Consoler of all suffering and of all pain and misery, to those who seek to Him for succour. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." What consoling thoughts for sufferers are these! We look at our Holy Lord, at all He endured for us, and how can we complain? We may suppose Him to say to us, "Look, My son, compare My sorrows, My humiliations, with Thine; reviled, spit upon, disfigured by frightful blows and scourging, My hands and feet pierced, stripped and insulted while on the torturing cross—what suffering equals Mine, for Thy sake, My

son? Is there not comfort *here*—in the love and true sympathy of our Lord, Who feels and knows the pains and the difficulty of fighting the good fight to attain submission, especially where disease causes such disfigurement as to be distressing to others to look on the sufferer? When we think that Christ endured even that aggravation for us, how should it soothe us under all! What sight of great pain must the Lord, fixed in agony on the cross, have been; and yet He bore all without murmur. Thomas à Kempis well says, “Christ’s whole life was a cross and martyrdom, and dost thou seek rest and joy for thyself?” How often may these thoughts greatly lessen the weight of suffering, and help us to fight bravely

in His strength, Who has promised an immortality of happiness to His faithful ones. We may trust and hide our sufferings in His loving care Who knows them all and feels for us, while ordering them for our eternal welfare. Fight then the good fight of faith ; be strong, and He shall comfort thine heart, and put thou thy trust in the Lord for ever.

The Sufferings of Luxury

*"A guardian spell
To chase repining fancies as they rise."*—CHRISTIAN YEAR.

YOU may meet in the world some people who have never really suffered, but imagine that a little languor and complaining will become them. These are *few*, we trust; but such there are on earth. If a passing agitation troubles a few of their nights, they declare that they sleep not at all, and are devoured by fever. The least fatigue, and some nervousness, giving them a head-ache, they lie down, insist on being waited upon, and declaim to every one on their great illness; fancy it to be an excuse

for ill-humour, and order people about ; irritate themselves, possibly shed tears if contradicted ; or become hysterical, and assure all they see that their sufferings are most terrible. My friend, be not you one of these ! If there is a small pain any where, they summon doctors, and often take up valuable time which would be else devoted to real illness. Do not you so act ! If you ask these persons what their ailment is, their only answer is that "They suffer like a martyr." Do not you be one of such martyrs ! Some of these people watch their health so closely, that every little thing disquiets them ; they seize every slight symptom, discourse upon it, and almost wear it as if an ornament. Some of these go on

in this course so long that they end by becoming really ill. It seems, then, that God has fulfilled their wishes to be tended, and pitied, and inquired after, and petted like children; and now they have fretted and mismanaged themselves into the reality of suffering, and will find that very different from the slight ailments before so magnified by them. When real pain and infirmity comes on, they will lament the passing by of the state they once thought so suffering. My friend, do not you so misuse your life! Reserve your energies, so as to meet patiently whatever God sends you in love. Be also careful not to exhaust the compassion of others, which will be freely bestowed on you in your time of need.

Try to subdue all tendency to idle complaint of slight ailments, from which even the strongest are scarcely ever free. It lowers the soul and turns it from duty, it wrongs real sufferers, and it is a provocation of the justice of God, Who detests all such complaints and all ingratitude. Consider, you who have a good home and comforts, and all alleviations in sickness—think upon those who are seized with illness far away—the traveller, who, strange to the place and all about him, has only an hotel to rest in. Perhaps he comprehends not the language of the country, and cannot make his wishes known; if he but asks for a cup of water, he is not understood. Think also of a voyager taken ill on board ship,

his illness most likely increased by sea sickness, and obliged to be landed at the nearest port, probably far off from his place of destination. Fancy the distress of a young woman, who, having left parents and relatives to follow her husband far from her native land, beholds him die, and has to arrive at her new home alone, overwhelmed with grief and illness. Think of an exile, who would gladly once again embrace his aged mother, and, falling ill, knows only that strangers will lay him in a nameless grave. Consider a good Missionary, who, over-worked in his zeal, is attacked by fever, and has to send a messenger perhaps fifty miles for medical relief. Fancy a soldier, stricken and wounded,

or seized with mortal illness—forced to lie down to die by the road side, watching his comrades of the regiment march past him—gradually losing sight of brothers and friends, and with only the faint hope that some stranger may take pity on him and soothe his dying hours. Have you ever thought of the great anguish of multitudes who thus suffer, away from parents, children, friends and country, without relief and without a smile of recognition, and yet hope and trust all to God and His love, to support them through the painful passages of this trying though transitory life? They look for another and far better home in the land that is very far off, which, when reached through Christ's merits and

mercy, will overpay all sufferings borne in His strength patiently here below. Let us ponder on these troubles, which are real, and hourly taking place; and then we shall the less deplore our own sicknesses, when surrounded by friends and every alleviation which skill and kindness can afford us. Shall we not be weak and ungrateful if we still, in our smaller ailments, murmur and repine?

A Chapter for the Rich

"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends."—PROVERBS xiv. 20.

HERE is a contrast! In the same town, and in winter, a poor man fell sick, and a rich man also fell sick about the same time. The rich man was kept to his house, elegant in every respect, his wife and children about him, thinking of every possible alleviation to his suffering—his physicians and servants all occupied with him. The news of his illness spread, and troops of friends came to make inquiry and to offer help. The poor man, though equally ill, was forced to go to his work, that his family

might have food; but on his return home, burning with fever, after many efforts he mounted the stairs to the small room he rented, to find no fire, and but straw for a bed. There he lay down, and in time he heard his wife and three children come up stairs and enter. She lighted a little lamp and went to her husband's side, and seeing his illness said, "What must we do for bread to-morrow?" The poor man opened his eyes, and seeing his wife spent with labour and grief, and the children looking at her for food, was silent, and only saw in his mind's eye famine. He at once knew, what the poor mostly find out, that, his labour stopped by illness, there was nothing but starva-

tion for his family. Meanwhile the rich man called for his steward, desired him to give a good sum in charity (would that the poor man's wants had been known to him!); and then, as his illness became more serious, he properly made his will and gave such orders as he judged right to do. His loving wife scarcely left his pillow, and his children seldom his room, so anxious were they to do all they could to promote his recovery. The poor man became worse, and first one thing was sold, then another, of their poor furniture; till, no rent being paid, the landlord threatened to seize the little the poor family still possessed, and to turn them out. At last, much against the will of both hus-

band and wife, the latter was obliged to apply for relief to the guardians of the poor, and to beg for the Doctor. This Doctor was a kind man, and at last appeared; he was clever and very desirous to attend to all, but he had too much to do; he stayed a short time by the sick man, ordered some remedies to be fetched by the wife, looked at his list of patients, and took leave—he had already more than he could get through in that day. The rich man had many physicians, and remedies without end; his illness still continued, but as yet no misfortune beyond great anxiety had entered his mansion. Some great speculation in which he was interested opened, and his friends determined not

to agitate him about it, but took upon themselves to advance money for him, that he might be no loser by his incapacity for business at this time : the speculation succeeded beyond their expectations. The poor man, having at last sold a book that he greatly prized as his father's last gift, was absolutely destitute ; his wife went humbly to borrow a small sum from a neighbour, told him of her poor husband's loss of work through his illness, and begged for the loan. This man determined to help her ; he drew from his purse the sum she named, then, holding the money in his hand, he discoursed to her of the want of care and of foresight in the poor, of their imprudence and faults, told her

that by working diligently they would always have enough, and should study economy, courage, and patience. Then he lent her the little sum of money, and put down carefully in his book that she owed it to him. Poor woman ! she was too thankful to have what would procure necessities for her sick husband, to care much for the way in which it was given. Things went on some time thus—the rich man began to recover, and the poor man had some little assistance from the charity which is active when such distress is known to exist; but time went on and he got no better of his malady. When spring appeared, the rich man was well, but not being equal to business or gaiety, he was advised to go to

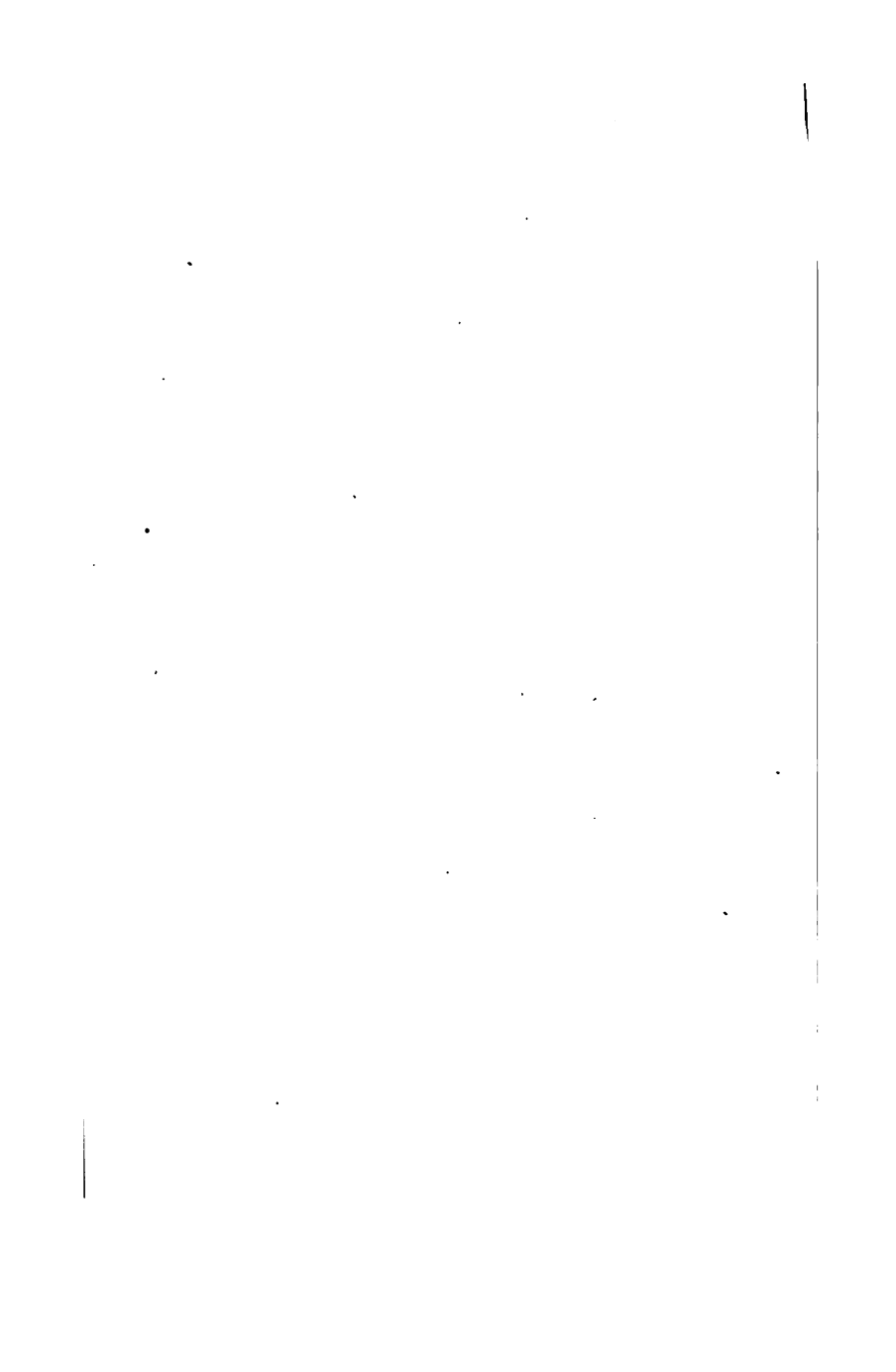
his estate in the country for quiet and change of air : he went without delay, with his attached wife and family. Now, though in winter the poor suffer most, in summer the absence of the rich leaves them often without employment, and without friends to assist in time of need. Thus it was with this poor man ; those who had helped him left one by one for the country, and he found at last that he was totally destitute : a demand for rent was made, which he could not meet, and ruin came : his family were turned out, the wife and children sent to the workhouse, the man himself to the hospital : a month more, and he was at rest in death. The same day that he died, the rich man wrote from the coun-

try to a friend thus, "You cannot imagine the embarrassment of all sorts that my unhappy illness in the winter causes me. Every thing seems to go wrong since then. I have missed several grand speculations; I languished all the winter by the fireside, and now I am here in this quiet place away from the pursuits and society which I like best. I try to resign myself to the will of God; but I own it is a trial to me to do so, and I quite envy poor people, who have no great concerns or interests on their minds; and the more I think about it, the more I am persuaded that the poor should not murmur at their lot, for in truth they are often much happier than we are." Thus reasoned this rich man,

surrounded by all that this world can give in comfort. He would have felt differently, could he have seen truly the state of the poor; but he knew it not, and so was deceived; he also *felt* his *own* cares and troubles, and those of *others* were not present to him. But it all shows how equally the Lord of the world apportions the lot He orders for his many creatures; each station, rich and poor, has its comforts, its blessings, and its distresses and trials—much more so than, looking merely on the surface, one can appreciate. Many rich people, envied by the poor, have sorrows in their families,—sickness and trials in themselves and their friends,—which do not appear outwardly to the world, but

show the goodness of the All Wise, Who will not allow His children to have all smooth in this world, lest they lose the hope of the better land He prepares for all who love Him. He tells us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but" (adds for our consolation) "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

The Sick and his Pastor



"Son, be of good cheer."—S. MATT. ix. 2.

"MY kind friend," exclaims the sick man, on seeing his Pastor enter: "I am overpowered by sadness, help me to some comfort under it."

"What is it troubles you especially now, my poor friend?"

"I feel that all the world is active—is engaged in pursuits, and duties, and toils, and I alone seem quite useless and idle in the world; and that I am only or chiefly occupied with self, my own selfish concerns, and sufferings, and infirmities. This thought disturbs me sadly, and humbles me dreadfully—not

that any humbling can be too much for me, sinner as I am; but I did feel once an ardent will and desire to work for the glory of God and to help my brethren, and I still feel the desire, but have not the power of exertion as formerly."

THE PASTOR.

"My son! have you not yet understood the object of pain and suffering? Then listen. Of all things which man must learn by experience, suffering is the most needful. He who has not suffered, how can he comprehend the sufferings of others? It is like a blind man talking of colours! From this arises the want of power to console sufferers; and nothing remedies this want—not the

most tender affection nor the greatest devotion to the sick : the experience which breaks the ice, gives the power of consoling the afflicted. My son ! have you not often found this in your weakness, when near those in health and prosperity ? Many of these love you and would willingly relieve you ; but, however eloquent and clever their discourse, it was wanting in the one thing needful to comfort you. This one thing, this true feeling and comprehension, nothing gives but the personal acquaintance with pain and sickness. This is so deep a law, that Christ Himself, Who knows and orders all things, chose to experience the infirmities of human nature, to be to men the experienced Consoler to Whom

they might fly in all their distresses. And this partaking of human nature gives to Him an attraction of sufferers to Himself; they do not look, in sorrow, upon His glory in the Transfiguration, but on His agony in the garden, His Cross and Passion; and they feel, "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Again, my son! this knowledge is great, and neither intellect, study, nor even love, can stand in the place of it; he who has it not will wrongly touch the unhappy, but he who knows what sorrow and suffering are, has a secret which is infallible. He who during long years has traversed a

road of pain and anguish,—anxieties for others, fears and weaknesses, disgusts, failure of hopes of recovery, tears shed in secret over many sorrows,—such an one, my son, if he has not suffered in vain, ought to be in this world a true and ever ready consoler. He acts surely and well by those who suffer; his words work forcibly, and the sick, the unhappy, the afflicted, know him at once. Others may speak kind words, but he understands; and, by a word, or look, or sign, he penetrates and touches for comfort the suffering soul. Such a person is gentle and patient with the sick; he knows that the sufferer is feeble, and though at times needing a firm word to restore his energy, yet for the most part

to be treated by him with indulgence and tenderness, as a mother treats her infant child. Such a comforter leads the sick to the remembrance of our blessed Lord and Saviour, and of all He did and suffered for our sakes. Thus, my son, you may be thankful for having suffered, and for still suffering, if it thus gives you a power and a treasure to use in going to see the afflicted ; or, if unable to do this, some distressed person will approach you, to whom you can, from your experience, speak much that may console his soul. Receive him as one sent to you by God's will and love, tell him that you too have known sorrow and pain, listen carefully to his account of his own troubles, sympathize with him to the

utmost of your power, give him what counsel you can, and you will have given him great consolation, even if it be but in the knowledge that a sufferer feels with him and for him in his many trials. When recovered sufficiently (if God grant you such restoration), go freely among the poor and the afflicted. Your own sorrows will be lightened by this; and you will hear of many sufferings which so far surpass your own, that you will, in a degree, forget yourself in the effort to assuage the griefs of others, and you will feel great thankfulness; and, in prayer to God for the afflicted, you will feel,—“I went forth to help others, and I am myself aided and supported; I wished to dry the tears of others, and

I have stayed my own ; I tried to calm the grief of others, and I have lost much of the bitterness of my own sorrows ; I wished to give all the relief I could, and relief and blessing from our loving Lord has been sent to me : all praise be to Him for ever !”

Solitary Hours at Night

"Thou hast proved and visited my heart in the night-season."—

PSALM xvii. 3.

THERE is often a very trying hour to a sick person—the last of the evening before the night is settled in. Great fatigue and weariness then comes on ; and, with many persons, the feeling that the night to them may be a trying one, is very painful. During the day, there is an activity in those around, which, in some degree, excites the sick ; and the efforts made by friends and attendants to cheer and amuse, wile away painful hours during the day ; but the last hour is occupied by them in arranging for the sick

during night, and in preparing for their own repose. Here we are speaking of habitual invalids ; as, of course, in all cases of acute disease, such as fevers, inflammations, &c., the sick should have an attendant or nurse to sit up with them and to watch by them all night. Many sick people suffer very much from want of this *constant* watching at night. An attendant lies down on a bed in the room, and falls fast asleep ; and the sick person kindly abstains from waking her, unless upon the most absolute necessity, and probably after hours of suffering, which a person sitting up watching might have prevented. But in cases where the sick are able to be left alone at night, they often dread the long hours

without sleep, which they fear will be their portion. Many envy the rest their servants are about to take, and would fain delay their departure ; but this should on principle be subdued, as, after all their care and trouble during the day, they must require right repose at night. This should be well weighed and acted upon by the sick ; nevertheless, this last hour is inwardly a trial to the worn and harassed spirit. But in this, as in all other trials, *what* but the sovereign remedies,—prayer, patience, and thoughts of the sufferings our blessed Lord endured for us, and that He might sympathize with us,—can avail for true relief? Was it without reason that He, Who could have saved the world with

one word of His lips, was content to take upon Him the infirmities of our mortal flesh, sin only excepted? The holy Saviour willed, not only to save His creatures from eternal death, but, by partaking of their nature, to console, strengthen, and help them during this mortal life—to leave upon this earthly suffering life the impression of His patience and His victory. What, then, did this Holy Lord to comfort His sufferers at this hour of evening trial? He went through it in the garden of Gethsemane; and, by His submission to His Father, showed a ray of light and a pattern for us to follow. Till this hour, our Lord was surrounded by His disciples; He ate with them His last supper, and ap-

pointed the Divine Sacrament of His Body and Blood ; He gave them His last instructions, and He pronounced His sublime prayer for their support and guidance. But His hour of Sacrifice approached, and this Sacrifice began by His hour of solitary prayer. After leaving His disciples at the entrance to the garden, and taking with Him only St. Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, He permitted them to know some of the sorrow of His heart, and commanded them to pray and watch with Him. But with these loved followers very near, the Sacrifice would not have been complete ; He therefore quits these favoured friends, and now, behold Him alone in His deep agony ! Behold Him alone ! He suffers

all that solitude adds to terror, anguish, and trouble; He falls into an agony causing a sweat of blood! Twice, in sorrow unto death, He returns to His disciples, and twice he finds them buried in sleep. He disturbs them not, but by the plaintive words to St. Peter, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?" He returns to solitude, and prayer, and deep sorrow. The sick, when feeling but a shadow of the woes He bore for us,—when assailed by trouble, painful thoughts, and "terrors by night,"—may believe that for us, and for our consolation, He did not shrink from His long-foreseen anguish, and willingly suffered for our sake that hour of untold grief. When the outer world is shut out from the sick, and many are

occupied in gaiety and pleasure, of which perhaps the echo reaches to the chamber of suffering, let it go. Envy not those amusements, of which many are partakers whose inward hearts are in sorrow hidden from the outward world, and try to feel that the appointed lot of suffering is ordered in love; and, if endured in submission to His will, will bring blessing in the end. Think on the Lord's hour of agony; and that thought will console, and strengthen, and soften the heart for the hours of trial. Friends and servants must have rest; and, if unduly roused in the night, the sick must expect to find them heavy and half asleep, and ready to slumber again as soon as they have done what is asked by

[illegible]

Night

the sick. But beware of irritability and impatience in this case, and without urgent cause disturb them not—learn to be alone with thought, and with Him Who is ever near to protect and console. Fears, lowness, and troubles of mind will come; but unite them with His Who suffered all, that He might succour all who suffer, and strive to say from the heart, with Him, “Not My will, but Thine be done.” It may please Him to send an angel to bless and comfort.

Nevertheless there *are* some invalids who like the hours of rest and calm; even if devoid of sleep, they are then free from the fear of disturbance, which at times harasses in the day-time.

Eight

"The day is Thine, the night also is Thine."—PSALM lxxiv. 16.

THERE are those sick persons who dread the night, from knowing, or at least fearing, the want of sleep it may bring, and the troubling thoughts often then present; but this should be fought against, for often it is a time very profitable for the soul, as an exercise of patience, and of the blessing which attends the endeavour to be submissive and still. Almost all sick people pray for patience, therefore must not quarrel with the mode taken to bring patience, which is trial and suffering. Much may be done to help to bear the trials of night. It is well to change the course of thought by

reading for a short while, say a Psalm, or a short chapter of the Bible, or some good book we have in hand—or rising and changing the posture for a little time. Sometimes sleep will be given after an exertion of this sort; but, if sleep be denied, how many thoughts connected with night may be dwelt upon. It was at night that the Lord of all, the Saviour of the world, willed to be born in a lowly stable. It was night when the angels appeared to the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks, with the marvellous glad tidings of the Holy Saviour's birth, chanting "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men." It was night when an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream; and this holy man

obeyed by taking the holy Child and His mother from the sword and wrath of Herod. It was night when He walked on the water; and, having reached the ship, it was instantly at the port to which it was toiling through the tempestuous waves. It was again at night, when, as He was asleep on a pillow in the ship, the storm arose, and the disciples cried "Lord, save us, we perish;" and "He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." It was night when S. Peter and the other disciples, throwing their nets into the sea, could find nothing until their Lord's commands brought such abundance that their nets brake with the multitude of fishes. It was night when

the timid Nicodemus came to seek the Lord Christ, Who, in compassion to his weakness, instructed him in His word and doctrine. It was night when our blessed Lord partook of the Last Supper with His Apostles ; and ordained the Holy Sacrament of His Body and Blood for the continual remembrance of His Sacrifice, and for the life, and soul's health and strengthening, of those who meekly, and with true repentance, faith, and charity, receive that holy gift and blessing. It was night when the Lord Jesus Christ, leaving His disciples, and with His soul "sorrowful even unto death," prostrate on the earth, suffered for us agony which no mortal can fathom ; for the sins of the whole world were laid upon Him "Who knew

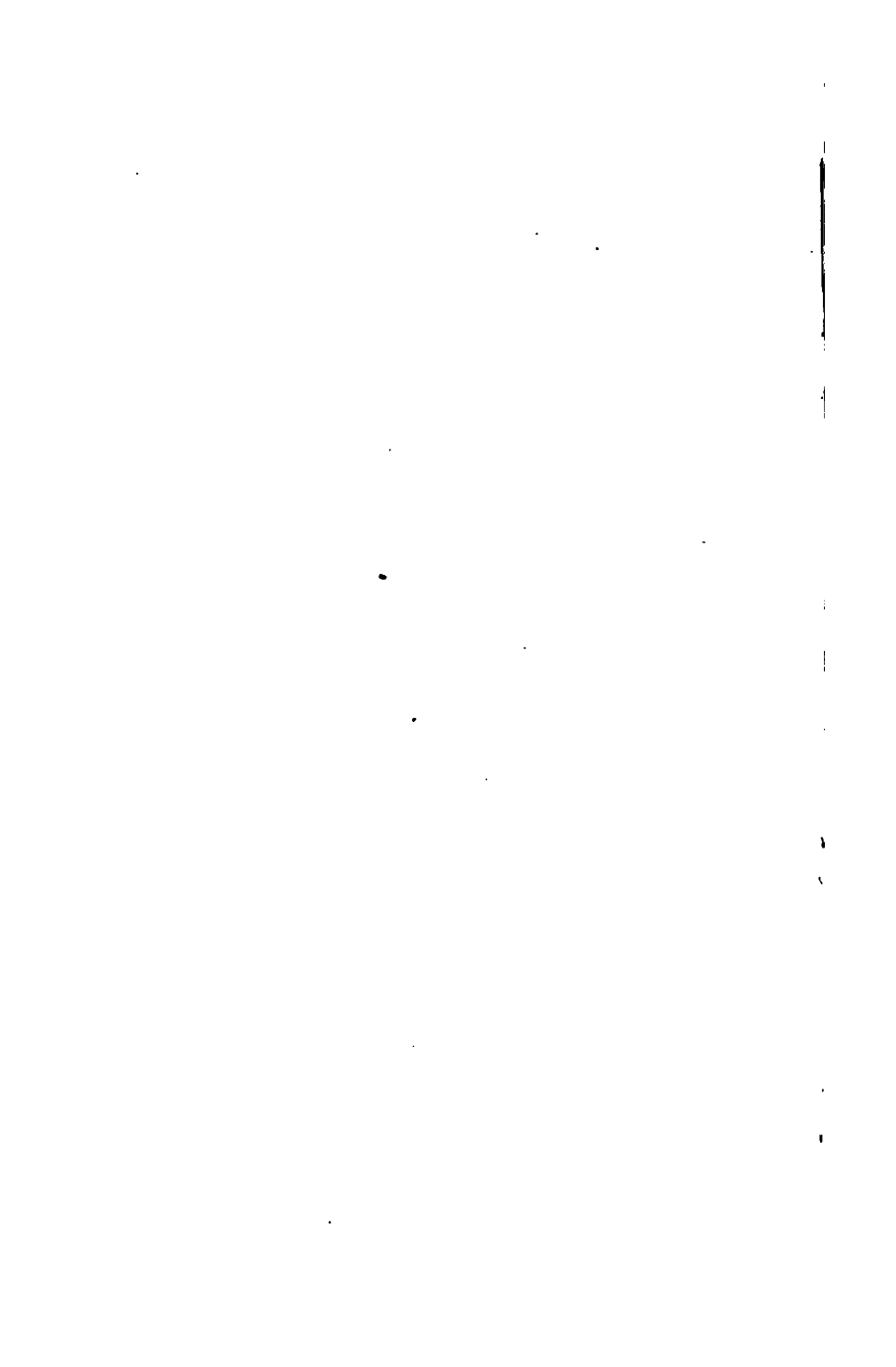
no sin." It was again night when the traitor Judas approached His Lord and gave the treacherous kiss, so meekly received by Him he betrayed, and the multitude led Him to the palace of the high priest. It was still night when St. Peter, in fear, denied the Lord, was restored by the look of sorrowful love, and at once wept bitterly for his sin. It was night when the soldiers insulted Jesus, telling Him to prophesy, and striking Him with the hand. It was night when the Pharisees set a watch over our Lord's Body in the sepulchre; and it was yet night when Mary Magdalene approached the place where the Lord had lain, and ran to bring His disciples word that she had found Him

not. It was early night when, the Apostles being assembled, the Lord suddenly stood with them, and said "Peace be unto you." It was night when St. Peter, called by an angel, cast off his fetters and was delivered from his prison. It was night when an angel appeared to St. Paul and commanded him to have courage; for, having borne testimony to his Lord at Jerusalem, so must he also bear testimony to Him at Rome : night when an angel was sent to guard him in the tempest, and to pronounce that God had ordained that all persons in the ship should be saved from death. It was night when the early Christians assembled in caves and deserts, and bore their dead to catacombs, for fear of the

persecutions which surrounded them. We, of these times, can little realize those sufferings which the saints bore, even unto death, rather than deny their Lord and Saviour—the risks and alarms of those nightly meetings for prayer and praise and the celebration of the Holy Sacrament, when such attendance might, and did often, bring them to death for the faith. How ought we to value, far more than we do, the many privileges we enjoy in churches and services allowed in open day! and what desires should we feel to pray with the fervour those holy martyrs did while in hourly expectation of a cruel and violent death! though martyrdom must have been a holy and glorious death, most marvellously

watched by Him for Whose sake and faith they endured it. It is at night that often the deepest penitence is given to us—at night charity watches the couch of the suffering poor—at night is tried the patience of the sick. Who can tell of what avail may be the prayers of those who watch in faith, and in thoughts and plans of love, for their fellow creatures? O you, who are sick, ponder these things, meditate on some of the remembrances here briefly recounted; much comfort will then be given you, even in pain and sleeplessness; the calm and silence of night may then become dear to you, and will be brighter in your memories than a day of excitement and gaiety can be to others.

**The Delays of God, our Heavenly
Father**



*"Oh tarry thou the Lord's leisure: be strong, and He shall comfort
thine heart; and put thou thy trust in the Lord."—PSALM xxvii. 16.*

THERE are other things to be felt besides pain, for this may be short-lived, and may last but for a moment ere it is gone. But it is the long continuance of suffering ever nearly the same, and the almost monotony of an infirmity, which is so trying, and often so impossible to alleviate or remove. This length of suffering, without a prospect of amendment, often causes in the mind a feeling which is neither exactly despair nor impatience, but a sort of weariness which desires relief, though

the soul is at heart resigned; but the burden often sinks it, when the same pains ever recur. Then one has hardly heart to cry to God "How long, Lord, how long? How often shall I cry to Thee without Thy hearing me? Lord, wilt Thou ever turn Thy face from me? How long wilt Thou see without pity my affliction? O Lord, why hast Thou forsaken me?" A soul thus cast down to the ground loses often the clear view of things; it expects little of the future, it thinks any change in its unhappy state impossible. This is a common effect of ills very long continued. Such a soul must have great energy, to hope against hope; and to feel that these phantoms of the sameness to be endured

are not always what they seem, and may, if so God wills, be in time dissipated. When the storm long endures, and the heaven is black without breaks, when, as far as the sailor's eye can pierce, he sees only the waves rolling and tossing, it appears to him as if he should never see the sun again, and that the tempest will never be calmed; yet it needs but a light breeze to chase away the clouds, and give back the sun's cheering rays, and soon to quiet the roaring ocean into a lake of beauty. Christian soul! you never hope enough! What you take for the forgetfulness of God, is but a sign of His love to you. He delays, does He not? He does so towards those He most loves, and from whom He expects

much glory. Take the Holy Scripture narrative of the blessed Lord's actions with Lazarus and his sisters Martha and Mary. We are told that He "loved" them, and the sisters sent to tell Him that "he whom He loved is sick." He yet delayed to help them ; but He allows us to see that in so doing He glorified His power more than the restoring of Lazarus from sickness would have done. We should read and re-read this narrative of His marvellous goodness, and praise God for having in His love to us permitted this to be recorded for the everlasting consolation of men. We know that our Lord loved Lazarus, yet He came not to his assistance at first ; then, in spite of danger of death from the

rancour of the Jews, He came. He consoled Martha by the promise of the resurrection; and when Mary sank at His feet, He allowed His tears of sympathy with human sorrow to flow. Then He spoke; and, as God, commanded Lazarus to arise from death. Thus did He show His love for Lazarus and his sisters—though in His heavenly wisdom He delayed to answer the sisters' prayer; He did not spare them the sight of their brother's dying moments, and also left them four days in the depth of their grief. All must have been mystery to these sufferers; but the Lord explained all in the word "This sickness is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." If, then, we believe

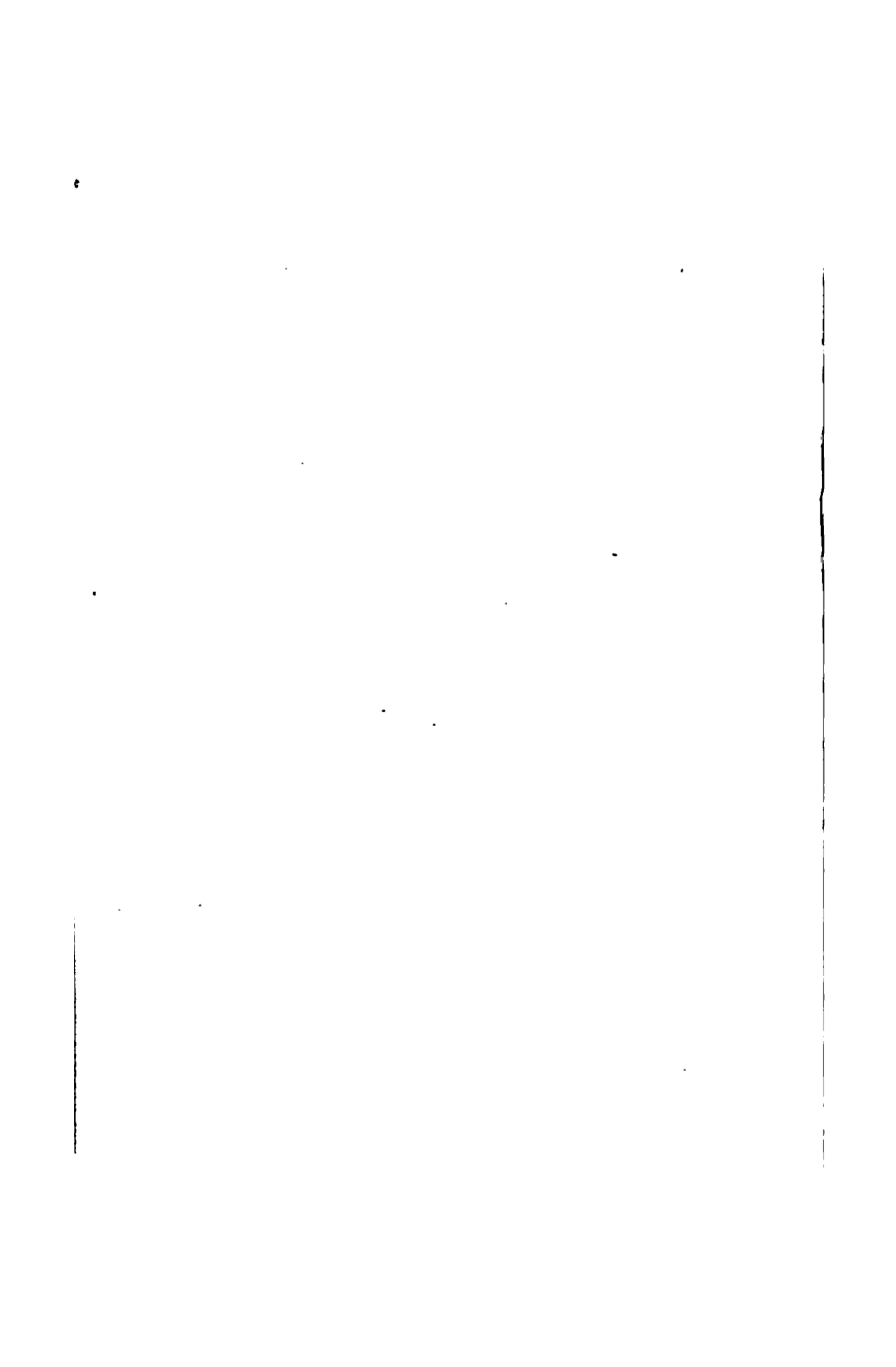
His glory,—His love for Lazarus, the benefit of the many Jews who were witnesses of this stupendous miracle, and of after generations for whom it is written, the happiness and joy of the tender sisters on the restoration of their dear brother,—we see in each circumstance of the delay a fresh measure of wisdom and love; for the recovery of Lazarus from sickness would not be the wonderful testimony to the Divinity of our Lord and to Holy Scripture, which his having been raised from his four-days' tomb must ever be, for consolation to the faithful and condemnation to the subtilities of unbelievers. Had Lazarus been only raised from his *sickness*, the holy and sublime spectacle of the tears of our

Lord over the sorrows of His loved ones would have been lost to the world. The Jews, struck by His tenderness, said, "Behold how He loved him." Lazarus, restored only from *sickness*, would not have known in his own heart the depth of his Divine Master's love, which triumphed even over death and the grave. Had Lazarus been but restored from a sick-bed to health, the holy and loved house of Bethany would have lost the extreme happiness which was given them, in the sisters receiving their beloved brother from his tomb, and pressing to their hearts one awakened from the sleep of death; and whose restoration to his sisters, Martha and Mary, must have been to him great joy and felicity. Oh!

the delays of the Saviour, the mysterious delays ! the Divine slowness ! the little mind of man suspects and murmurs at these. Men have but a short time to live ; but eternity is the Lord's, and He has wisdom to choose His times and seasons for affording consolation and joy to those who have waited with submission and patience His will and hour of relief. Christian ! whatever mysterious weight and lengthening gloom attends your maladies, think not that the delay of God is forgetfulness of your misery. When you appear, like Lazarus, already enclosed in the sepulchre of your mortal sickness, when the doctors of earth have pronounced your doom of death—listen, still listen, for the echo of the footstep

of Him, Who will come to many when they look not for Him, approaches. At the sound, your heart will cry out: "My heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God." You will have your chains snapped; and, called on by name, like Lazarus, by your loved Redeemer, you will re-enter the land of the living,—but you will re-enter it after passing, with His support, the dark valley of death; and revive, to live for ever, free from all sin, sorrow and suffering, and devoted to His glory for eternity. Christian, think on these things! Such thoughts will soothe and console in many long and dreary hours of pain and sickness here below, appointed for us by One Who loves and afflicts only for our eternal benefit.

The Prayers of the Gospel



"Every one that asketh receiveth."—S. MATT. vii. 8.

CHRISTIAN, do not afflict yourself beyond measure as to your weakness in prayer, but try to resign yourself to that feebleness in expressing your wishes; for the Saviour of men knows your feebleness, and will receive the smallest efforts made with heart and good-will. Have you ever thought upon the prayers which it pleased the Lord Jesus Christ to hear and answer while He sojourned here below? They were so simple, that all the suffering and weakness on earth could not prevent such prayers from being offered. Think

on some of them. A leper came to our Lord and prayed thus—"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Jesus replied, "I will; be thou clean." A Centurion came, his servant grievously ill, and prayed Him for relief—"I will come and heal him," said the Lord. But the Centurion adds the humble and holy words,—now ever prayed by the Communicant before the altar,—“Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.” The Apostles were in the ship with Jesus on the lake of Gennesareth: the wind rose, the waves were in tumult, fear seized the poor disciples—"Lord, save us, we perish." Instantly the Lord

commanded the winds and the sea, “and there was a great calm.” A poor woman, afflicted above twelve years with disease, said to herself, “If I may but touch the hem of His garment, I shall be whole.” He turned to her and said, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” In this instance, the woman had not dared to speak to Him, to offer her request. Two blind men cried, “Thou Son of David, have mercy on us.” Our Lord said, “Believe ye that I am able to do this?” “Yea, Lord.” “According to your faith be it unto you;” and the blind men received forthwith their sight. A woman of Canaan came to Jesus, and cried—“Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously

vexed with a devil." The Lord at first seemed not to hear her; but she prostrates herself and prays again. He answers, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." This woman confessed herself to be but as a dog; but she was rewarded for her perseverance under such discouragements by the Lord's words—"O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Once a poor paralytic man, unable to approach the Lord Jesus, was let down through the roof into His presence;—this mark of faith and hope was equivalent to prayer; and, without a word, he hears Jesus say:

“Thy sins are forgiven thee. Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.” On another occasion, the silent bitter tears of a bereaved mother obtained her desire. The Saviour was entering the small town of Nain, when He met the funeral procession of a young man, “the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.” The mother attended the body of her son. The Lord looked on her, was touched with pity, and said, “Weep not.” He approached the bier and said, “Young man, arise.” He sat up, revived, and Jesus delivered him to his mother. What joy and gratitude must have been hers at so unlooked-for a mercy and restoration! A woman that had been a sinner, prays only by her tears. When

she knew that Jesus sat at meat in a Pharisee's house, she silently entered and began to kiss and anoint His feet with precious ointment, and to wipe them with her hair. The host was astonished, and said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, He would know what manner of woman this is, for she is a sinner." But the tears of Mary Magdalene touch the heart of Jesus, and speak her penitence, and bring forth the blessed words—"I say unto you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much;" and then to the loving woman, "Thy sins are forgiven, go in peace." What words of deepest consolation were these to her, and to all sinners who repent as she did! Zaccheus, at first, spoke not; but his

earnest effort to see the Lord called down His blessing upon him, and the astonishing words that He would condescend to enter his house. The woman by Jacob's well, near Samaria, said but few words when the Lord Jesus had spoken the gracious words of eternal truth; she prayed—"Lord, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." The paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda said only the words of resignation, "Lord, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool." The heart of our Lord speaks to him words beyond all his hopes—"Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." What was so simple and short as the prayer of the two disciples going to

Emmaus, when the Lord Jesus would have left them?—"Abide with us, for the day is far spent;" and the Saviour abode with them, and presently filled their hearts with joy and gladness in making Himself known to them in breaking of bread. Have you remarked how short are the prayers throughout the wonderful story of the raising of Lazarus:—"He whom Thou lovest is sick," "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died?" The simplicity of true love triumphed. The Lord wept in sympathy, and to the devoted sisters restored their loved brother; and for ever hallowed the natural tears we shed over the loss of those we most dearly love; and gave the proof of His love

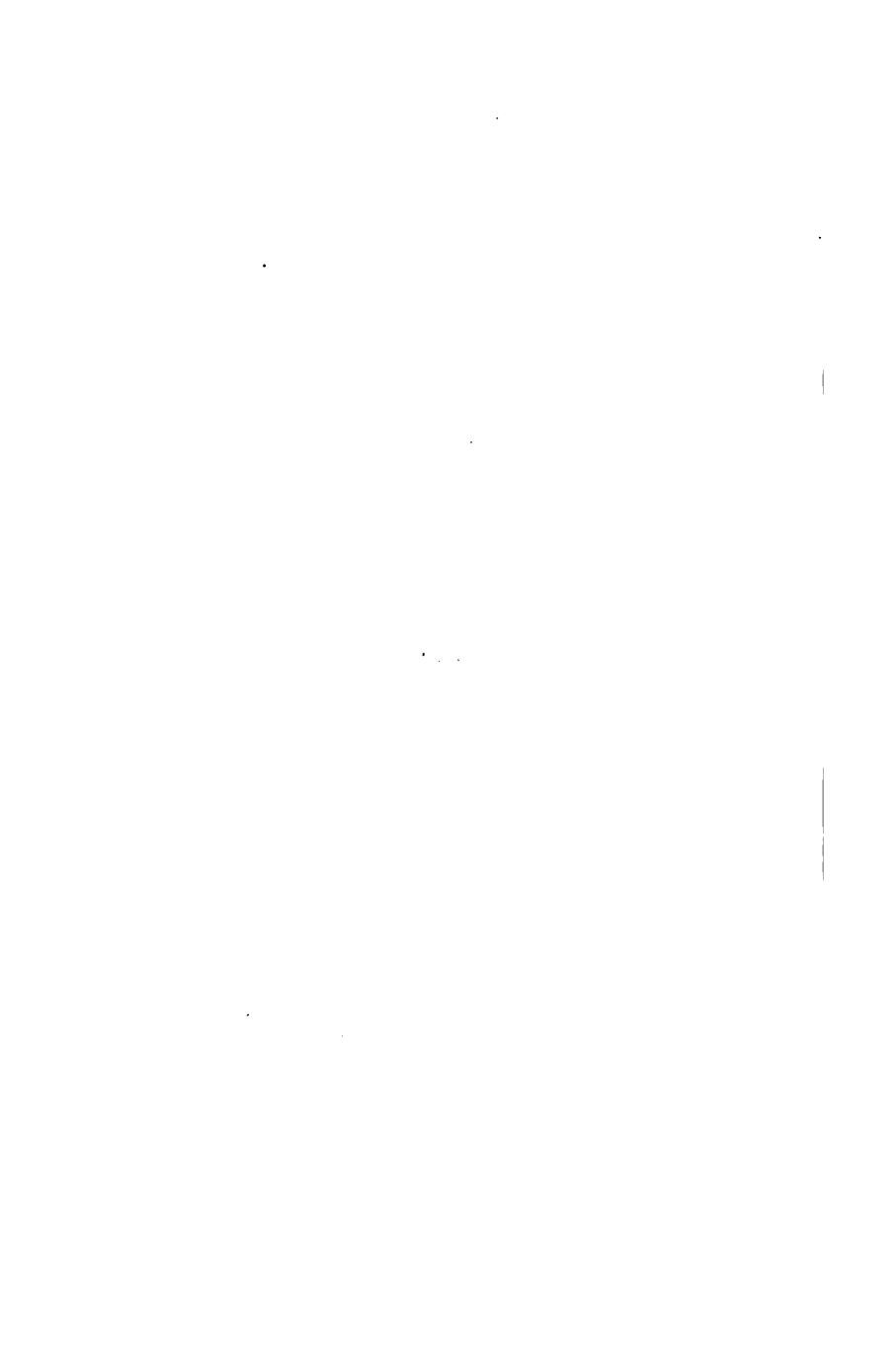
for us men, and of His feeling for the woes and sufferings of us sinners. One short prayer is addressed to our Saviour in the last hours of His life. The penitent thief, crucified by His side, believes and prays, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." To this thief His last reply is made, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." A holy divine, in a sermon, writes on the Thief on the Cross—"If any penitent will pray each day, as did the penitent thief, 'Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom,' a day will *at last* come, when, as to the thief on the cross, the Lord will say to him, 'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.'" What an encouragement to

pray this one petition with heart and soul !

Such, then, are the short and simple prayers which it has pleased God should be recorded in the Gospels for our instruction and guidance. With these examples, need we seek, in moments of deep suffering, long sentences of prayer to tell our wants to our Father? The heart of man, created by the Lord, and known in all its weaknesses to Him, how can it but, in trial, cry simply for aid to the Eternal Friend? And He, the Eternal, loves and will comprehend and help the creature He has made. Let us never pretend to adorn our prayers with fine words, when we have but to show our tears and simply make our petition, to

be assured of being heard and helped. Let us console ourselves, then, with the cry of our feebleness—such as would be, and is, the cry of a sick child on the lap of his mother. God, who loves all far more than all mothers can, loves the true heartfelt prayer which only seeks to show its faith, its hope and submission to His will.—O Lord Jesus ! Who answerest the prayer of the humble, and hast shown us in the Gospel that the simplest petition was heard by Thee, grant to us the love of truth and simplicity, the abandonment of ourselves, and to rest only on Thy love, Thy tenderness, and the tears of tender pity which Thou didst shed over the sorrows and sufferings of men !

Recovery from Sickness



"Thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not Thou deliver my feet from falling?"—PSALM lvi. 13.

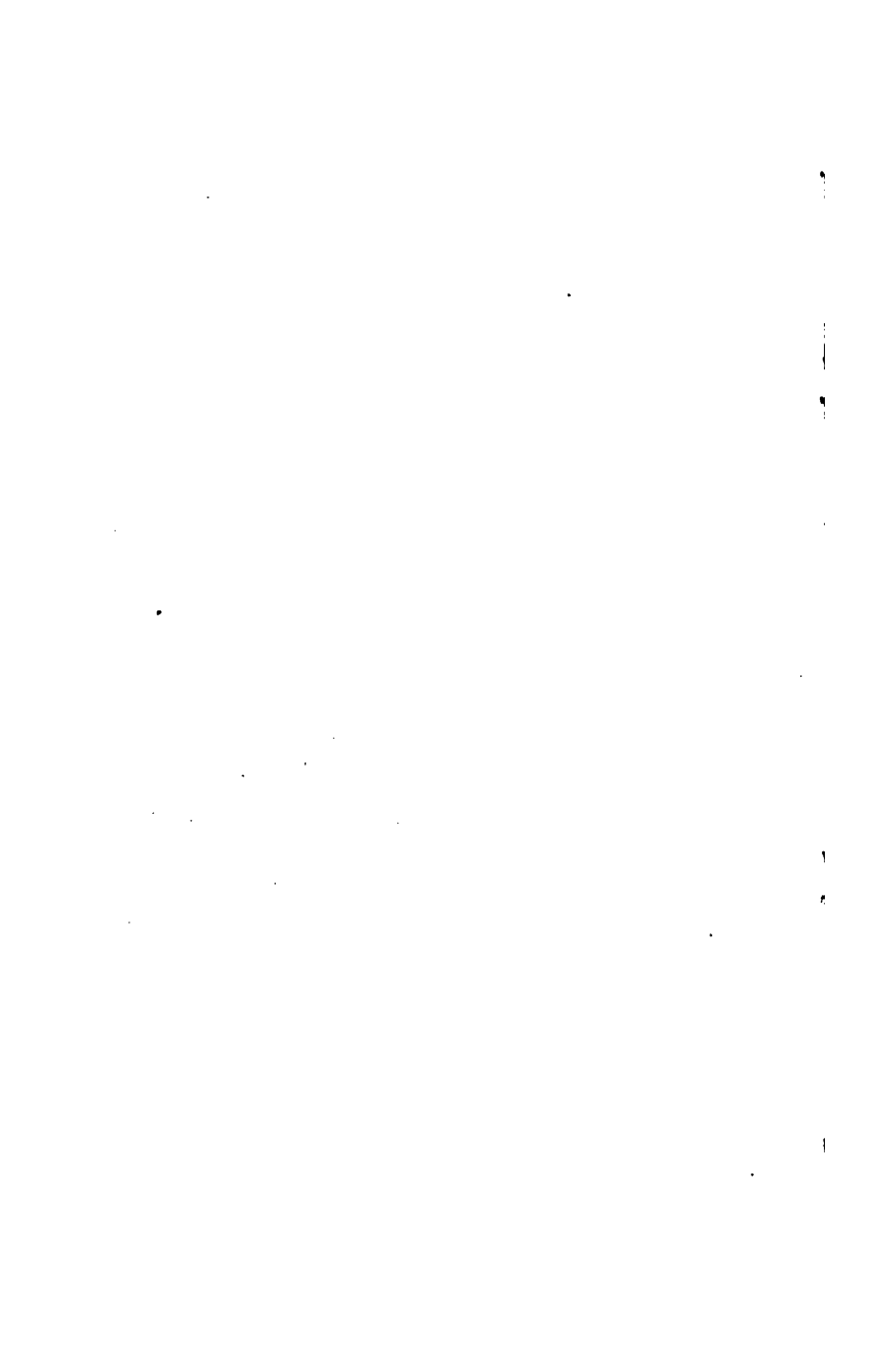
FIRST, all alleviation and amendment in suffering should call forth heartfelt thanksgivings to the loving Father who, for wise causes, sees fit to prolong our lives, that they may be spent to His glory. To some persons, and from some illnesses, the recovery is almost pleasure: the mere weak languor, and the feeling of gradually returning strength, is enjoyment to some; to others, the convalescence is more difficult to bear well than the acute illness it follows; for often, in recovery, the sufferer feels more

ill, though told by others and knowing by reason that he *is* getting better; and often the weakness of nerves which acute attacks leave, makes him more alive to the pains and uneasiness which remain when the danger has passed away. This is a trying time to the patient: every one says—and he knows truly says—“better,” while he feels in himself very ill still. Then he feels, too, the danger he is in of losing the holy impressions which the apparent near approach of death gave him. He lived in company with anxiety and suffering; he heard, as he thought, the angel of death hovering over him; he thought of the thousands of sins of his past life—such vanities, such weakness of purpose,

so many hidden faults, and some too visible to the world, and causing evil to others as well as to his own soul—all these he has lamented and repented of, and prayed for prolonged time, that he might show his repentance by leading a new and much better life; he made good resolutions and promised to strive to keep them—he earnestly implored power to perform these vows. Now, by sorrowful experience, we know how weak and inconstant are our promises made when danger is at hand. It is one thing *then* to pray, and another to bear in mind those prayers when tempted to our old faults. There is all the difference between the hour of fear and storm, and the hour of calm and peace. The incon-

stancy of the heart of man is great : I see before me a vision of this inconstancy of purpose, and I seem to abhor it ; I see its ingratitude, and that I detest ; I feel as if I could not be of the number of those who are so cowardly as, after their return to God in danger, to yield to old faults and temptations, or to serve as slaves do, and not as the children of God. May I then renew, confirm, and afresh consecrate in the calm hours of recovery, those promises which I made in peril and anxiety ! May I fear my own frail and inconstant will, ever ready to betray me into evil ! May I never forget the days of anguish now past ! The thought will not be one of sorrow, for His past mercies will brighten it ;

and it may follow me into the world, to guard me from its evil pleasures. I must remember, then, my weakness, the rapid approach of death, and the truths which a close view of death brings before the mind; that time flies, eternity advances, and that it is indeed folly to aspire "to gain the whole world," when by it we may lose God for ever. To Him, the Saviour, the Consoler, the Support of the weak, the Strength of the dying, and the Resurrection of the dead, be ever glory, honour, love, and blessing, from generation to generation for evermore!



Return to Life

"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."—PSALM cxvi. 14.

PERFECTLY restored by God's mercy to health, we should feel that this gift of new strength is not for ourselves alone, or to be spent on selfish aims and pursuits. In this fresh gift we contract a new debt to our Almighty Father, and must try to devote it to His glory who has given it. Does this idea appear too large a one? and do we ask how we are to accomplish this? We owe our efforts to all men for His sake who created and redeemed all. We fancy that to work for those nearest to us is

all that God requires of us ; but no, a Christian is one who loves all and must try to help all to the utmost. A Christian all his life says the prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." What does this mean, but that the Christian ever prays for the whole world? St. Paul tells us to pray "for all men;" and when he adds that no one suffered persecution but that *he* suffered also, and had, besides his many trials, the care also of all the Churches, he surely intended supplication to be made for the whole human race. Now, this should be the duty of all Christians, varying its application by the state of life and duties which it has pleased God to appoint for each, accord-

ing to His all-righteous will—but all should strive for great aims and desires for the salvation of all men. Death, to which we have felt very near, is often the means of arousing us to fresh duties. Its apparent approach often breaks ties which might lead us to evil, or it loosens our entanglements in the things of this world. It extends our thoughts beyond this lower scene, and shows us the true value of hopes and fears, and love of earthly objects. It shows the wonderful simplicity of our real duty; the details sink, all lesser things will die, and we feel more and more that the soul's salvation is the one thing needful, and that God is above all. Such should be the teaching which danger of death

should produce in us. Happy those who, having felt this, on returning to life, hold fast and act upon these recollections! Such thoughts will not turn us from real duty; they will not disgust us with the small details of every-day work; they will not make us dream, as some do, of the good they would wish to do, and then die without any good done. No! we shall know that, in desiring the salvation of all men, we must be content to do our small part in the state of life unto which our Father has called us—to help forward, to the utmost of our powers, His great work for men; we shall then be very humble and modest in our small works, while very ambitious for God's glory and the coming of

Christ's reign of justice and charity. Look around on the world; what confusion there often is! what mixture of good and evil! what forgetfulness of God! what profanation of things sacred! what weakness even in good men! what sin in the bad! what misunderstandings and disputes, often to end in war and bloodshed! Look and reflect, and resolve to take God's side in all, but expect difficulties and trials. Do not settle in a selfish peace, nor behold only from afar the fight of good with evil; but open the heart, and strive to do justly, to speak as conscience bids, to sympathize with the unhappy, to enter into even minor cares when help can be given,—even if it be but by looks or words of kindness,—

and thus try to help the right by courage, and hope, and prayer. Remember that one who has been very near to death, must be the better for such a trial, and let it not be in vain; but consider that the return to life must be for good to men, and by the grace of God, to live henceforth to His glory here; that, when this scene is over, you may rest for ever in happiness with Him who died for us, that we should follow the blessed steps of His most holy life, and adore Him for ever in Heaven.

THE END.



